

JUNE 2004

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COMPASS

GROWTH VISION



Compass
Southern California

*Charting the course for
a sustainable southland*



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Compass Growth Vision



THE "2 PERCENT" STRATEGY: SHARED VALUES, SHARED FUTURE

- ☉ *Vibrant, thriving cities and towns throughout Southern California ...*
- ☉ *Small pockets of concentrated growth in key areas ...*
- ☉ *Quiet neighborhoods that are a short walk or bike ride to nearby stores and services ...*
- ☉ *Shorter commute times because of better-designed communities ...*
- ☉ *Opportunities for successful businesses of all sizes ...*
- ☉ *A better home for future generations ...*

*T*hese ideas are not simply wishful thinking. They are this region's future reality, courtesy of a landmark collaborative regional planning project known as Compass.

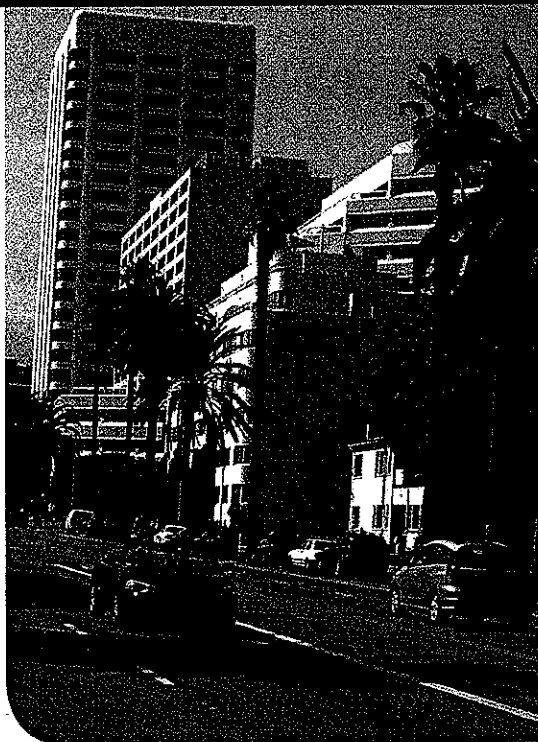
Compass involves making key changes in certain areas within Southern California, while leaving other areas largely unaltered. In many cases, there will be minimal changes – but with maximum results – hence the term the "2 percent strategy."

Anyone who has ever sat in traffic congestion, shopped in a supermarket, sent their children to school, or tried to buy a house reasonably close to their workplace understands that the Southern California region is changing. The growth occurring here is no secret to anyone.

So why not try to do something about it? That doesn't mean stopping growth – that would be an impossible task that also would greatly damage the area's economy and prosperity.

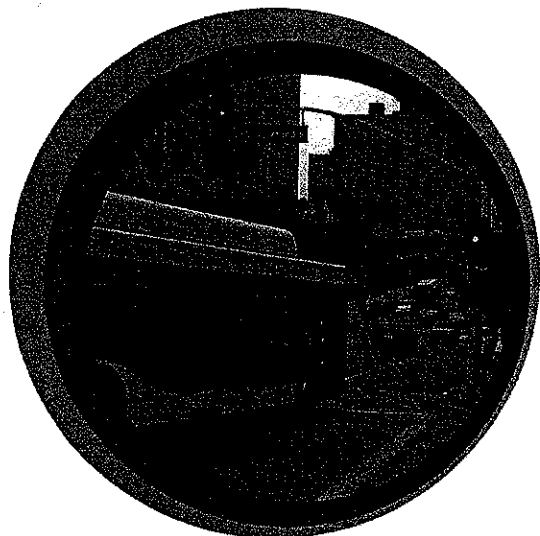
The better solution is to shape and manage growth in a way that is beneficial to everyone. That's what Compass is all about – taking the steps to use growth to the region's advantage and creating the types of communities where all of us want to live, work and play.

The Compass Growth Visioning Committee has identified four principles for managing growth. They can help us to get pointed in the right direction ... and head toward a brighter, bolder future.



THERE ARE PLENTY OF REASONS TO MANAGE GROWTH WISELY TODAY:

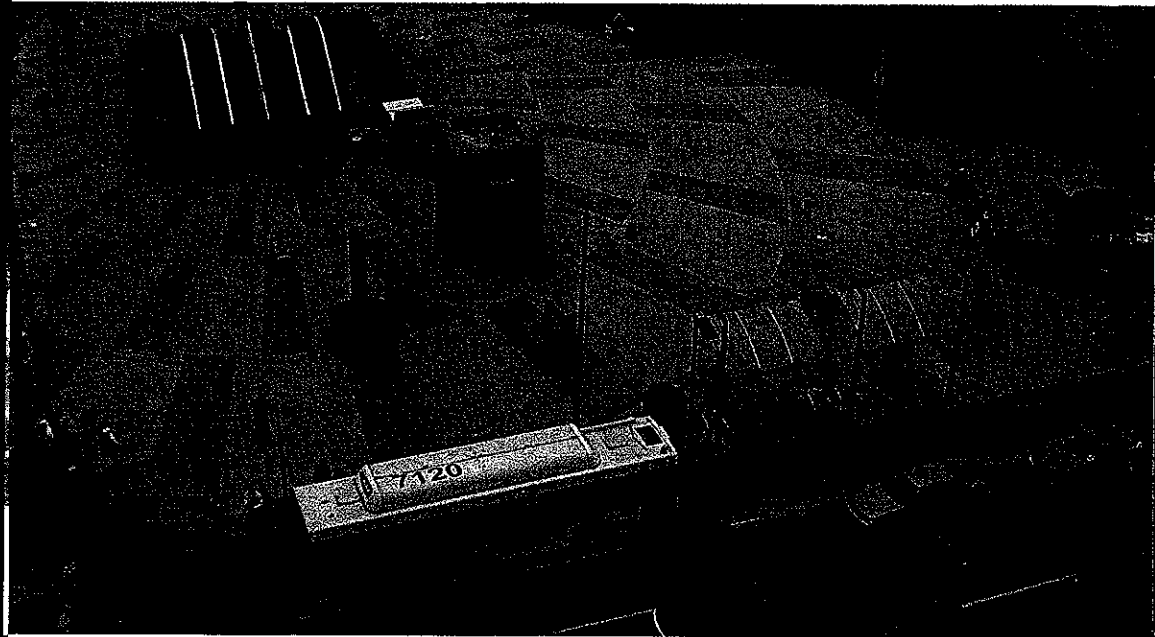
- There will be an additional 6.3 million people by 2030, with a total population of nearly 23 million people.
- If current trends continue, traffic congestion will more than double in 2030.
- The region's economy and workforce will see dramatic changes in the next 25 years, with projections that less than 40 percent of the population will be of wage-earning age.
- Air pollution will worsen due to increased population, warmer climates and more vehicles on the road.



Mobility

PRINCIPLE #1

☉ Improve Mobility For All Residents ☉



There are few topics more on the minds of Southern Californians than transportation. One of Compass's key features is its emphasis on boosting the region's mobility – helping people get where they want to go and in a way that uses land and other resources more efficiently.

The reality is that in any major metropolitan area there will always be traffic congestion. The key is to take positive steps to reduce that congestion and provide choices – such as walking, riding a bike, or using transit. In such a balanced system people don't have to use their car for every trip, for every errand, and for every commute to and from work.

INCREASING THE AREA'S MOBILITY MEANS:

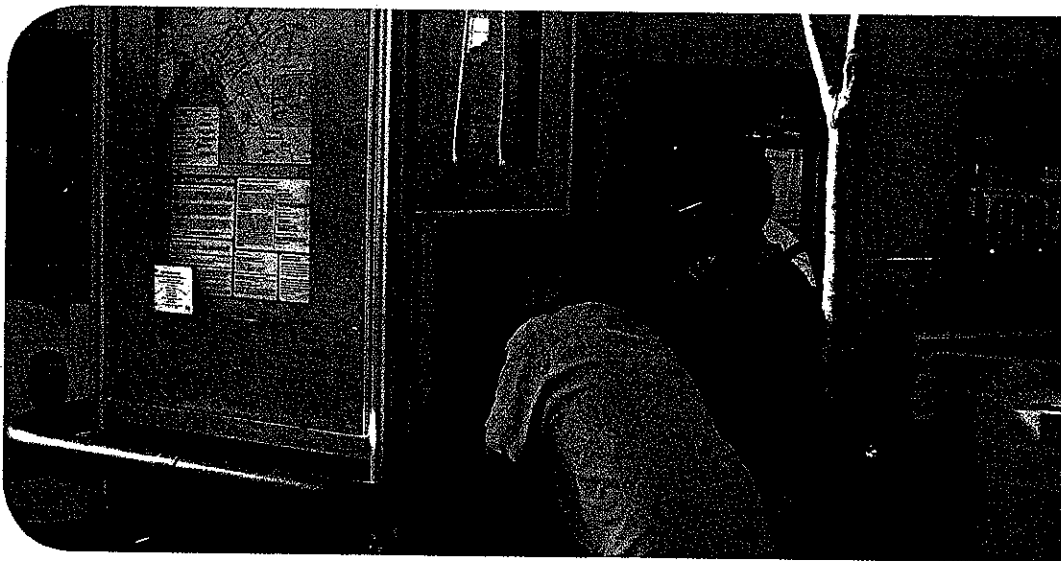
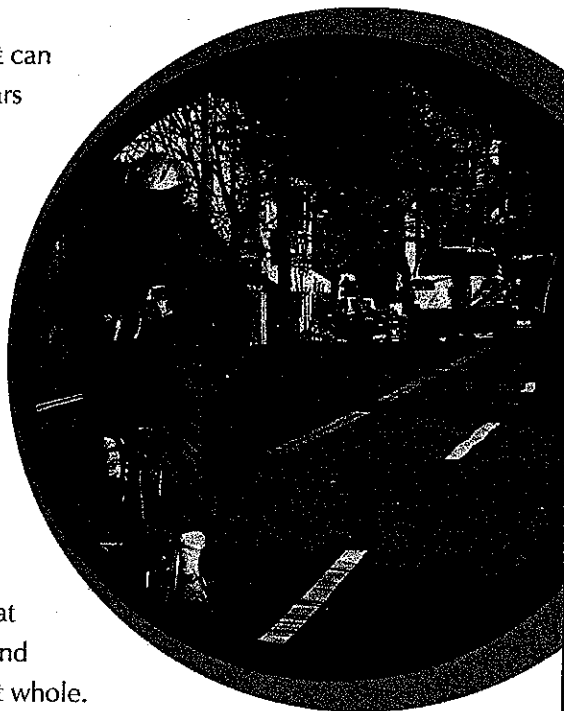
- ☉ Putting new employment centers and new neighborhoods near major transit systems so that people can have transportation choices other than their cars.
- ☉ Designing safe, attractive transit centers and plazas that people enjoy using.
- ☉ Creating mini-communities around transit stations, with small businesses, urban housing and restaurants all within an easy walk.

1. Compass calls for designing streets that can accommodate pedestrians, bicycles and cars and that can include amenities such as medians and street trees.

2. A key factor in increasing mobility is to shift the way we think about streets and roadways – to think of them as much more than simply a means for vehicles to get from one place to another. They should not be a place just for cars. They also should be a place for people.

3. On a broader scale, Compass means that the region must begin looking at land use and transportation as two parts of one important whole. Instead of making a decision about how a certain piece of land will be used – such as for a major new housing development – the region needs to think simultaneously about the transportation ramifications. How will residents of the new development get to and from work? How far away is the development from major services and amenities? What are the mobility choices for the people who will live there?

Other metropolitan regions around the United States have shifted, or begun to shift, their thinking about the relationship between land use and mobility. They have reaped the benefits, and so can Southern California.



Livability

PRINCIPLE #2

☉ Foster Livability In All Communities ☉

A livable community is like a great piece of art. It's difficult to define what makes a painting or sculpture great – but we know it when we see it. It also means different things to different people, just as there are many views of what constitutes a great city.

But there are certain key features that can and do define every livable neighborhood, community, city and region. These features will look and function differently in every location, creating a unique sense of place and character that defines a community and the people who live there.



INCREASING THE REGION'S LIVABILITY MEANS:

- ☉ Injecting new life into tired or underused areas by creating vibrant new business districts, redeveloping old buildings, and building new businesses or housing on vacant lots.
- ☉ Creating mini communities – complete with a variety of uses such as shops, lofts and townhomes, and small businesses – along or near major transit hubs.
- ☉ Carefully preserving existing, stable, single-family neighborhoods and existing natural and green spaces.
- ☉ Designing communities that can be enjoyed on foot, with plenty of opportunities for “people-scaled” experiences.

Small changes can make a big difference in the livability of a community. This sequence of photo enhancements shows how different street design can make a typical intersection much more walkable and inviting.

Whether people choose to live in a relatively dense urban core or in one of the region's many suburbs, there are plenty of ways to increase our livability. Some areas will experience minimal change, while others will see more pronounced changes. Emphasis will be placed on focusing new growth in existing areas that are located along major transportation systems – resulting in better access to jobs, cultural opportunities, and a variety of housing choices.

Livability may mean something different to everyone, but a common thread that runs through any livable region is a sense of community, innovation, character and progress woven together into something that simply feels right. It feels like home.



Prosperity

Sustainability

Making it Happen!

CALIFORNIA COMPASS

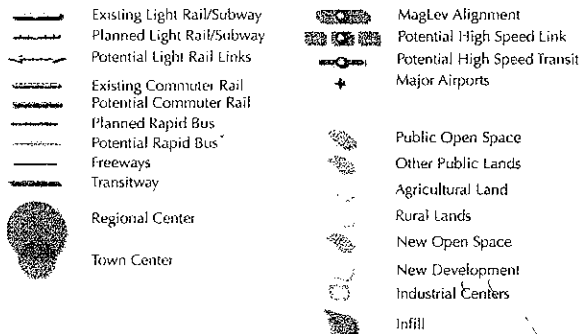
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Regional Growth Vision



In looking at the Southern California region from a broad view, we are reminded of the area's tremendous natural beauty, diversity of communities and experiences, and economic prosperity. Protecting and enhancing what we have for tomorrow means taking steps today to make positive changes.

Developing a "2 percent strategy" means there won't be wholesale changes for everyone. Instead, there will be relatively small, incremental changes in some areas that will have a positive effect on the region as a whole.

Prosperity

PRINCIPLE #3

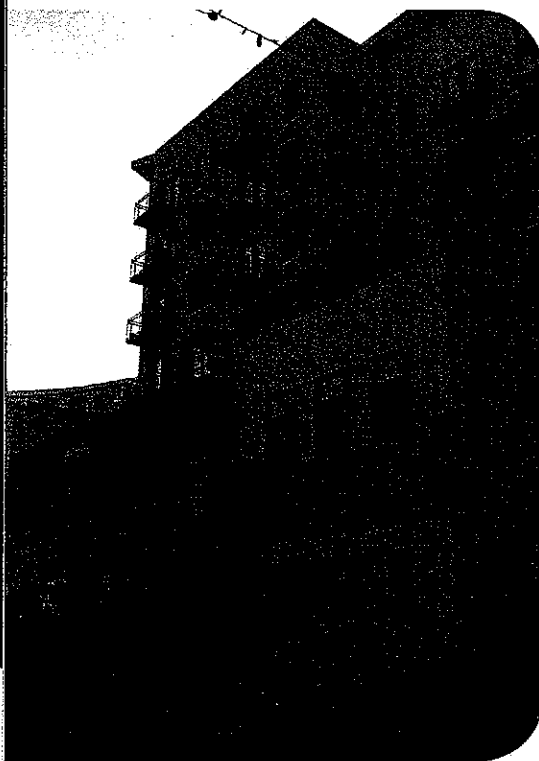
☉ Enable Prosperity for all People ☉

A vibrant, successful community doesn't just happen. It requires a long-term commitment to seeking new opportunities and to supporting policies that encourage a healthy economy.

Southern California is already ahead of many communities in this category. We benefit from a strong, vibrant freight system that moves goods from the region's ports to consumers throughout the world. Our world-renowned film industry serves as a focal point for tourism and tens of thousands of jobs. The Southland is well known as a center of culture and commerce.

INCREASING THE REGION'S PROSPERITY MEANS

- ☉ Taking steps to create local and state policies that encourage balanced growth and many different kinds of jobs and industry.
- ☉ Providing a range of housing types so that people of all income levels can live comfortably and safely.
- ☉ Supporting a cohesive approach to land use and transportation decisions so that limited resources can be used most effectively.
- ☉ Treating communities equitably when it comes to environmental issues so that one area or group of people does not bear an unfair burden.

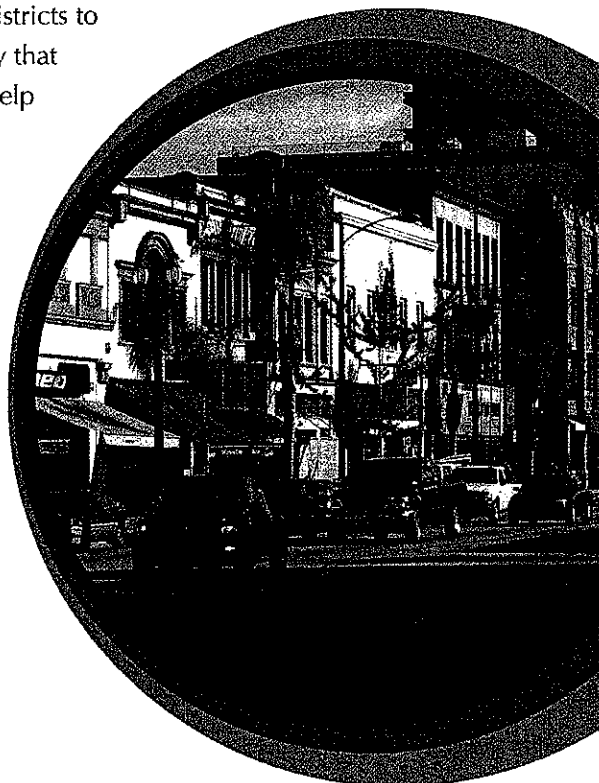


*Who knew that maps
and land-use plans
could have such an
impact?*



But there is more that we can do to continue this prosperity during the next few decades. We can bolster our growth management policies, as outlined in the Compass growth vision, by encouraging new growth to occur in major centers and corridors rather than spreading outward. These policies will allow communities and business districts to develop a unique character and identity that will increase consumer spending and help the economy.

Nearly every region in the country, including Southern California, could benefit from updated land-use policies that encourage innovative approaches to creating better, more vibrant communities. The Compass project represents an important first step – a vision for how Southern California can make great strides in ensuring that its long-term economy is healthy and beneficial to everyone.



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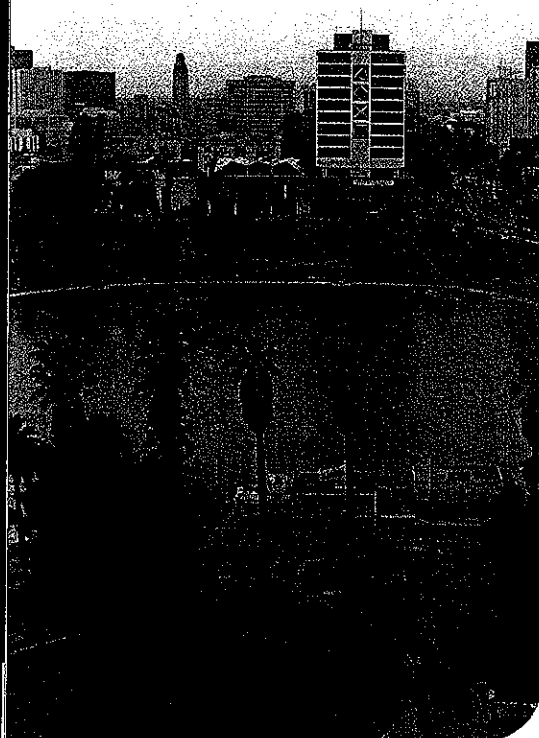
Sustainability

PRINCIPLE #4

☉ Promote Sustainability for Future Generations ☉

Every region that faces significant future growth also faces a serious threat – that it will lose its open spaces and natural beauty as it grows and changes. Southern California, with its projected growth of an additional 6.3 million people by 2030, is especially vulnerable to that threat.

A number of hillsides and natural areas already have been lost to development, and Southern Californians are interested in taking steps to ensure that growth does not occur at the expense of this region's natural beauty and environmentally sensitive lands.



INCREASING THE REGION'S SUSTAINABILITY MEANS:

- ☉ Protecting rural, recreational and environmentally sensitive areas so that development is restricted.
- ☉ Ensuring that there are ribbons of green, areas of natural habitat, and parks and open spaces even in the midst of dense urban areas.
- ☉ Focusing future growth in urban centers and existing cities so that rural and other natural areas aren't developed.
- ☉ Thinking creatively about how to accommodate growth but in a way that uses "green" building techniques and that minimizes any negative effects on the environment.

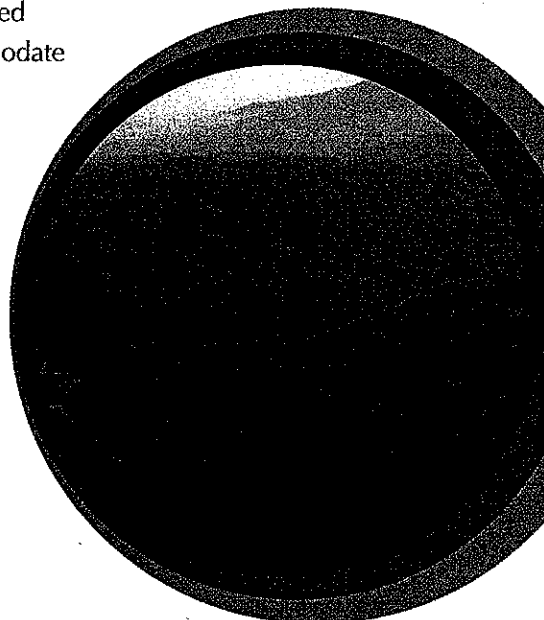
*Preserving open space
is important for healthy
communities throughout
the Southland.*



Many communities within Southern California are already taking steps to protect their local natural areas. But metropolitan regions throughout the U.S. have found that a local approach needs to be complemented by a broader, regional approach to preserving natural areas and the environment. Taking the regional view would help ensure that all communities have access to nature – both for environmental reasons and for each community's long-term prosperity and livability.

Compass outlines how a regional, coordinated approach to sustainability will help accommodate growth while also protecting key areas, including: steep hillsides, locally designated open spaces, farms and other agricultural uses, and lands that have been identified as potential future open space.

Of course, no community intentionally sets out to diminish its natural beauty and its environment. But it sometimes becomes an accidental byproduct of growth unless careful policies are adopted to protect these areas.



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Making it Happen

Making it Happen



*T*hese are exciting, invigorating times for Southern California as we embark on this journey toward creating the kind of livable communities that will benefit today's residents as well as those 30 years from now. But there is much work to be done. How, then, are we as a region going to start implementing some of the changes described here?

Here are just a few key steps that are being taken to move forward. The region will:

- ⊗ *Develop a method for monitoring and measuring planning efforts that soon will be under way. What gets measured gets done, and it's critical that the region monitor progress so that we can learn early on what is working well and what is not.*
- ⊗ *Work collaboratively with other regional governments to enlist the help of the state legislature to change state laws that can hinder progressive growth management strategies.*
- ⊗ *Tap into the expertise and experience of local plans so that local communities can adopt their own unique policies while still embracing a broad, regional partnership and set of strategies.*
- ⊗ *Create a targeted educational and public information strategy so that area residents, civic leaders, elected officials, business leaders and others will understand the elements and importance of regional growth management policies.*

- ⊗ Embark on a number of crucial steps to improve the region's **mobility**, including: prioritizing transportation improvements and developing a set of pilot projects that will illustrate the on-the-ground effects of the new regional growth vision.
- ⊗ Act on several strategies for improving the region's **livability**, including: assessing the region's diverse housing needs and helping local governments implement specific pieces of the regional vision.
- ⊗ Develop a range of actions to keep the region **prosperous** and healthy, including: providing training on how to maximize public-private partnerships and taking steps to create a better balance of jobs and employment opportunities throughout the region.
- ⊗ Promote policies that protect the region's environmental and natural **sustainability**, including: integrating current local plans for open space protection into a larger regional approach, training public agencies and private developers in strategies for increasing "green" building practices, and developing projections for how much water will be needed to accommodate future growth.

Southern California Compass: Helping Your Community, Your Region And Future Generations



⊗ To learn more about the Compass Growth Vision, insert the attached disc into your computer's CD-Rom drive to read the full report.

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